

(approved July 25, 2002)

**BOARD OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

**JUNE 6, 2002
PHILLIPS GRADUATE INSTITUTE
5445 BALBOA BLVD
ENCINO, CA**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mark Burdick, LEP Member, Committee Chair
Glynis Morrow, Public Member
Karen Pines, MFT Member
Roberto Quiroz, Public Member

MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Sherry Mehl, Executive Officer
Julie McAuliffe, Administrative Analyst
Kari Frank, Licensing Analyst

GUEST LIST ON FILE

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:05 a.m.

Ms. McAuliffe called role and a Committee was established.

Dr. Burdick stated this was the first of several meetings in which the Committee will present standards for education relative to Marriage and Family Therapists. He indicated that public forum input is very helpful in assisting the Committee with changes that may be needed.

1. REVIEW OF CURRENT CURRICULUM

Ms. Mehl stated that the educational requirements for licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist are delineated in the law. These requirements have been in law for several years and she asked if the curriculum still reflects the current profession. She indicated this is the schools opportunity to suggest changes if needed.

Katherine Wexler from Phillips Graduate Institute indicated her school has struggled with implementing additional courses, such a psychopharmacology and psychological testing, when the law language is so vague. Definitions such as how it is to be offered would be helpful. She stated that it would be nice if educators were involved in the legislative process so they could provide an educational perspective.

Ms. Mehl stated that the Board is very rarely the author of a proposal to add additional educational requirements and suggested that educational institutions be diligent in involving themselves in the legislative process. Ms. Pines stated that sometimes the Board is not informed of legislative changes.

Clarence Hibbs from Pepperdine University suggested that the Committee perform a complete review of the educational requirements. He submitted a comparison of California requirements and the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (AAMFT) Standards for the Committee's review. He indicated that the AAMFT standard is the model for most out of state program designs.

Mary Riemersma, Executive Director of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT), stated that CAMFT was the sponsor of the legislation to add psychopharmacology and psychological testing to the educational requirements. She did extensive research among schools and association members prior to proposing these changes and was informed that these were areas of training that was needed. She then indicated that the association's publication "The Therapist" includes thorough reports of pending legislation that impacts the profession and the reports are also available on their website.

Ms. Pines asked if the Board could utilize the occupational analysis that is currently being performed to determine if the curriculum is still reflective of the profession. Ms. Mehl stated that although some comparisons can be made, the testing process includes all components of preparation, including the experience process, therefore this would not be a complete comparison.

Ms. Mehl suggested that the Committee may want to form a taskforce with schools to perform a thorough evaluation of the current law and determine if the units required for each subject area is compared to what is being taught. She then stated that the consortium of educators may be able to assist in this review.

Ms. Wexler stated that she thought the curriculum required now is appropriately vague and allows schools to include their specialized training while meeting the requirements for licensure.

Ms. Riemersma stated that as other states evolve, the way that one practices in other states tends to look more like California as their licensing laws mature. She believes that over time other states licensing requirements will look very much like ours.

Mr. Quiroz stated that he thought everyone would agree that the current laws need to be reviewed. The profession of marriage and family therapy has changed within the marketplace and he thought the Board would welcome some specificity as to how current law and regulation really are reflective of the kinds of skills that are needed in the marketplace. He thought that some specific situations and issues would be very helpful to the Committee in determining if change is needed.

Ms. Mehl went on to state the Program Identification Update Form is to be completed yearly by all approved and accredited schools. The form is sent out in October of each year.

Ms. Wexler stated that it is sometimes difficult for schools to complete the form based on the integration of several teachings within different courses. She did not think that is was the place of a licensing board or the legislature to instruct an educational institution on the amount of course content that should be taught. She indicated that schools are able to complete the form but unfortunately is not an accurate representation of how teaching of the required curriculum is accomplished. Ms. Mehl explained that it is difficult for Board staff to determine if all requirements are met, based on review of the transcript, unless the courses are clearly identified and the timeframe for each course is delineated. Additionally, out of state transcripts are extremely difficult to determine if a certain degree meets the educational

requirements, therefore unit number identification is needed. Ms. Pines stated that, speaking to the other side of the issue, there are educational institutions that do not have as high standards as some schools and the Board's responsibility includes the assurance that schools are offering degree programs that will prepare a student for licensure. This is a consumer protection issue since students are consumers and enter a program with the expectation that they will be prepared educationally for licensure. Sometimes this charge of the Board conflicts with independence and creativity on the schools part but the responsibility goes beyond what might be good for all organizations that have high standards.

Jack Mayhall from California Graduate Institute stated that the current curriculum allows for both worlds. It allows schools to teach with an individual spin on the requirements but still delineates the necessary curriculum that must be taught.

After further discussion, Ms. Mehl stated that the Committee was not suggesting that anything needed to be changed. This meeting was an opportunity for schools to bring issues that need to be addressed to the attention of the Committee and Board.

Ms. Mehl then stated that legislation effective January 1, 2002 granted authority to the Board to approve or deny degree programs, regardless of approval or accreditation. The Committee may perform more detailed evaluations of degree programs in the future.

The Committee, audience, and Ms. Mehl briefly discussed the practicum requirements. Ms. Mehl stated that although the requirement in law is one hundred and fifty hours, most schools exceed that amount. She then indicated that if those schools that only require the amount identified in law are the schools that have a lower pass rate on the examination, there may be some correlation between the two and there may be a need to increase the amount of required practicum.

Robert Davis from Royokan College indicated that his point of view is to make their students as strikingly effective in the profession and he is frustrated with the training settings. He has been working for twenty-five years and the majority of the people licensed in this state have never been observed doing therapy, therefore the supervisor really has no idea how effective they are as therapists. He is very frustrated because there is no videotaping of sessions and he is constantly fighting to ensure that people are at least audio taping sessions.

Ms. Wexler commended the Committee on the recent addition to the regulations regarding the requirement for supervisor training and stated that more reassurance of a supervisor's proficiency is needed.

2. REVIEW OF TRAINEE EXPERIENCE

Ms. Mehl stated that in the early 1990's the Board registered trainees and was ultimately responsible for them. In 1992 or 1993, that responsibility was taken out of the law and given solely to the schools. The Board no longer has control over trainees and she asked if the schools have noticed any problems or concerns with any law or regulation in relation to trainee experience.

Debra Linesch from Loyola Marymount University stated that she feels very comfortable with the value of control of students as clinicians.

Dr. Burdick stated that his concern is that students obtain the best clinical experience available.

Again Ms. Mehl stated that the Committee is available to assist schools that are having difficulties in complying with the laws and regulations and is curious if there are any problems that need to be resolved.

Mr. Hibbs mentioned that sometimes there are very unqualified supervisors at certain trainee sites and thought that the quality of the supervisor could be enhanced.

Ms. Pines asked if educators have noticed any change in the quality of a supervisor since the implementation of the required supervisor training. Mr. Hibbs stated he thought it was too early to see any real improvements but he has heard comments of appreciation from students.

A gentleman stated that the AAMFT Supervisor Training Certification was very useful to him in his supervising experience.

Ms. Mehl stated that staff would begin to randomly audit supervisors as applications for licensure are received to ensure they have indeed taken the required training.

The audience indicated that educational institutions should be encouraged to instruct their students on the meaning of supervision and how to find a qualified supervisor. Some audience members indicated that their schools do provide this instruction to their students.

Ms. Pines stated she and her students from Sacramento State University were able to experience a video based viewing of several counseling sessions at an agency in Sacramento and that although it was very expensive, it was a very worthwhile experience.

Ms. Riemersma stated that she has noticed a renewed increase of interest in supervisor training from practitioners.

Robert Davis from Ryokan College suggested that the Experience Verification Form be revised to include the certification of the supervisor training.

Ms. Mehl thanked the audience for their suggestions for changes to forms and procedures.

Another audience member suggested that the actual training sites offer the supervisor training at a low cost.

Ms. Mehl briefly talked about the four-way agreement and clarified that the agreement should be signed by the supervisor, the supervisee, the work setting, and the school. The audience did not indicate that they have any problems with this agreement.

The Committee recessed at approximately 11:00 a.m.

The Committee reconvened at approximately 11:15 a.m.

Ms. Pines asked audience members to speak with their faculty and notify the Board in writing if they have any concerns or questions about the current curriculum or if anything needs to be added.

3. REVIEW OF EXAMINATION PASS RATES BY SCHOOL

The Committee and audience discussed the examination statistics. The Committee has noticed that certain schools have consistently high pass rates and some have consistently low pass rates. Ms. Mehl stated that the written examination has moved to a more clinical examination and this could be one of the reasons why the overall pass rate has declined. She then indicated that there are several variables that attribute to the pass rate, such as internship lengths and timeframes between registration and application for licensure, therefore these statistics should be reviewed as information only. The statistics may be reviewed for general trends but should not be reviewed as a specific indicator of problems.

David Fox, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, mentioned the examination statistics and indicated that there are huge variations within the schools and thought the problems were either in relation to the candidates themselves or in relation to the examination. Mr. Fox addressed the issue of validity. Ms. Mehl explained that the Office of Examination Resources validates the oral examination and each examination has separate validation. Mr. Fox then asked that the issue of the validity of the oral examination be included on the July meeting agenda.

Ms. Riemersma asked Ms. Mehl to further elaborate on the evolution of the written examination to a more clinical level. Ms. Mehl indicated that she, the Office of Examination Resources, and subject matter experts take vignettes currently used in the oral examination to determine if there are ways to implement these same test areas into a written format. The Board will begin to pilot test clinical simulations within the current marriage and family therapist written examination in July 2002.

The Committee discussed the possibility of adding a preface to the examination statistics to indicate that they are for information only, there are many variables involved, and potential students should contact their prospective school directly for their degree program analysis.

Mr. Quiroz asked if there really was a need to publish the examination statistics by schools. Audience members stated that usually the first two questions potential students ask is how much the degree program costs and what is the school examination pass rate, so these statistics appear to serve an important purpose to aspiring students.

Ms. Riemersma stated that before Ms. Mehl became the Executive Officer of the Board, statistics were not provided. She indicated that the statistics have been a helpful tool to students and schools.

KAREN PINES MOVED, GLYNIS MORROW SECONDED, AND THE COMMITTEE CONCURRED TO DIRECT STAFF TO DRAFT PREFACE LANGUAGE TO BE ADDED TO THE EXAMINATION STATISTICS TO MAKE THE THEM MORE UNDERSTANDABLE.

Ms. Pines asked the Committee if they wished to try to identify some schools that are really not producing an adequate number of students who are successful in the examinations. She thought the Committee could offer their assistance in helping them in ways of strengthening their students for successful practice in the future. Mr. Quiroz commented that he liked this idea and thought it was very proactive. The Committee agreed that this would be an area they would be interested in pursuing. Ms. Morrow suggested a questionnaire be created in the future and sent to all schools. Ms. Mehl suggested the questions include the amount of students registered in their program and specific traineeship information.

Mr. Fox suggested that statistics be produced to reflect the passage per content area. Ms. Mehl indicated that, at this time, we do not have the technological capabilities to produce these types of statistics.

Ms. Mehl stated this is an opportunity for the Committee to refocus on school responsibility and open communication.

4. REVIEW OF SCHOOL COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Ms. Mehl stated that the Program Certification Update Form was included in the meeting materials. The audience members indicated that there is some confusion on completing the form in relation to the child abuse assessment training. The Committee suggested that the law be quoted and an explanation of the law be included. Ms. Frank then stated that she would include a due date on the form in the future. Additionally, the Committee decided to include a box on the form in which schools can mark to indicate that there have been no changes. Ms. Mehl stated that the changes would be made and provided to the Committee for review at the July meeting.

5. REVIEW OF SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRAINEES

This issue was discussed in previous agenda item #2.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Susan Read Weil stated she was concerned that students are not fingerprinted before they are placed in practicum settings and some students work very closely with children. The school attorneys have told her that they cannot discriminate against a person who wishes to obtain an education. She went on to indicate that the school does include a disclaimer that states someone who has a prior criminal history may be denied a registration or license from the Board, but again is unable to deny them from practicum training. After discussion, the Committee suggested that the practicum setting would be the appropriate place for the fingerprint requirement.

Ms. Mehl thanked the audience for their attendance.

ROBERTO QUIROZ MOVED, GLYNIS MORROW SECONDED, AND THE COMMITTEE CONCURRED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:35 p.m.